Nielsen Norman Group

# Jakob's Ten Usability Heuristics

## 1 Visibility *of* System Status

Designs should **keep users informed** about what is going on, through appropriate, timely feedback.

## 2 Match between System and the Real World

The design should speak the users' language. Use words, phrases, and concepts **familiar to the user,** rather than internal jargon.

## 3 User Control *and* Freedom

Users often perform actions by mistake. They **need a clearly marked "emergency exit"** to leave the unwanted state.

## 4 Consistency *and* Standards

Users should not have to wonder whether different words, situations, or actions mean the same thing. **Follow platform conventions.**

## 5 Error Prevention

Good error messages are important, but the best designs **prevent problems** from occurring in the first place.

## 6 Recognition Rather Than Recall

**Minimize the user's memory load** by making elements, actions, and options visible. Avoid making users remember information.

## 7 Flexibility *and* Efficiency of Use

Shortcuts — hidden from novice users — may **speed up the interaction** for the expert user.

## 8 Aesthetic *and* Minimalist Design

Interfaces should not contain information which is irrelevant. Every extra unit of information in an interface **competes** with the relevant units of information.

## 9 Recognize, Diagnose, *and* Recover from Errors

Error messages should be expressed in **plain language** (no error codes), precisely indicate the problem, and constructively suggest a solution.

## 10 Help *and* Documentation

It's best if the design **doesn't need** any additional explanation. However, it may be necessary to provide documentation to help users understand how to complete their tasks.